

Executive Summary

In response to Governor Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.'s determination to elevate the visibility and role of the State Office of Ethnic Affairs, the first Latina cabinet member, Yvette D. Diaz, was charged with the challenge of making his vision a reality. The mission of the State Office of Ethnic Affairs (OEA) is to ensure Utah State government adequately meets the needs of Utah's ethnic community. To accomplish this goal, the Executive Director of the Department of Community and Culture (DCC), Ms. Diaz, with the support of Governor Huntsman, established the State Office of Ethnic Affairs as a separate division within the newly created DCC.

Since March 8, 2005, progress towards Governor Huntsman's vision has included the following:

Restructure of the Ethnic Office: Previously, the ethnic offices operated as independent silos and reported to the Division Director for Housing and Community Development, under the Department of Community & Economic Development. OEA now directly reports to its own director within DCC. OEA's efforts include a unified work plan where each ethnic director is assigned to a number of State agencies. The directors will not work as ombudsmen, but aim to bring institutional change by working in partnership with sister State agencies to review their policies, practices and procedures, and ensure proper outreach and response to the ethnic community. In addition, OEA will partner with State agencies to coordinate projects and events targeted at better serving the ethnic community.

To improve efficiency and make OEA more responsive, the ethnic offices were reorganized to work as one office and added four critical positions: Director of the State Office of Ethnic Affairs, Director of Public Policy & Research, Special Projects Coordinator and a Community Outreach Coordinator.

- **Director of State Office of Ethnic Affairs**— a sub-cabinet position responsible for the administration and management of the office.
- **Director of Public Policy & Research** – provides public policy analysis and data-driven research as a foundation for systematic change, educating the community and institutions regarding the ethnic community in the State of Utah.
- **Special Projects Coordinator** – assists State agencies in the development of projects that relate to the ethnic community, as well as develops and manages the OEA website features, such as the events calendar, ethnic resource directories, frequently asked questions and community resources.
- **Community Outreach Coordinator** – serves as the direct contact for the ethnic community informing them of State agency programs and resources, responding to specific inquiries and strengthening the relationship with the ethnic media.

2. State Agencies: OEA directors have met with Executive Directors of the Department of Health, Utah Insurance Department, Department of Public Safety, Department of Corrections, Governor's Office of Economic Development, Utah State Office of Education, Department of Commerce, Department of Human Services, Department of Workforce Services and the Department of Human Resource Management to introduce and establish a working relationship with OEA and serve as a bridge between State agencies and the ethnic community. OEA, in partnership with State agencies, will promote institutional change to assure equity and access to quality, cultural competent programs and services.

3. Town Hall Meetings: OEA sponsored 13 town hall meetings throughout the State. Town hall visits included: Cache, Weber, Davis, Millard, Salt Lake, Utah, Tooele, Sanpete and Washington counties. At these town hall meetings the OEA directors met with local citizens and stakeholders (e.g., mayors, State legislators, law enforcement officials, school board representatives) to introduce the new structure and mission of this office, educate and create awareness on the new driving privilege card law (Senate Bill 227), and gather public comments and suggestions for the strategic plan.

4. Ethnic Advisory Councils: Serving as the eyes and ears of the ethnic community, the ethnic advisory councils provided input on the executive order, by-laws and strategic plan. Their participation was essential to the success of the town hall meetings throughout the State.

This is the first time in State history that all the stakeholders listed above participated in the development of a strategic plan for the OEA. OEA incorporated the feedback received from town hall meetings, cabinet members, and ethnic advisory councils, into its strategic plan, setting specific goals and defining deliverables to directly impact the ethnic community. With the support of these stakeholders, we look forward to successful and productive execution of this historic strategic plan.